IRE Chavara, Kerala

2591. SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal to commence joint venture industries with any private companies or multinational companies is pending with IRE Chavara in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof :

(c) whether Government propose to entertain such joint venture industries with IRE Chavara; and

(d) the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY [(SHRIMATI) VASUNDHARA RAJE)] : (a) and (b) Indian Rare Earth Limited (IREL), a Public Sector Undertaking of Department of Atomic Energy has received a proposal to form a Joint Venture (JV) from M/s. Cochin Minerals and Rutile Limited (CMRL) a private sector company of Kerala for setting up a Mining and Mineral Separation Plant based on Chavara/Kayamkulam deposits to produce about, 1,00,000 tpa of ilmenite along with other associated minerals.

(c) and (d) In tune with the general policy of decontrol and liberlisation the Government of India *vide* Resolution of 6th October, 1998 has notified a modified policy on exploitation of beach sand minerals, according to which wholly owned Indian companies are allowed to engage in mining and mineral separation activities after obtaining requisite mining lease from the State Government concerned and a licence from the Department of Atomic Energy. Similarly Joint Venture Companies (including with foreign direct investment upto 74%) are also allowed to set up facilities for value addition to the minerals or integrated facilities for mining, mineral separation and value addition.

Payment of Telephone Bills in Lower Koti Sub-Post Office, Shimla

†2592. SHRI ANIL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have made any arrangements for payments of telephone bills in Lower Koti sub-post office for the convenience of the subscribers of the Lower Koti telephone exchange in Shimla district;

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.